



The Mughal Empire in India

MAIN IDEA

POWER AND AUTHORITY The Mughal Empire brought Turks, Persians, and Indians together in a vast empire.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

The legacy of great art and deep social division left by the Mughal Empire still influences southern Asia.

TERMS & NAMES

- Mughal
- Babur
- Akbar
- Sikh
- Shah Jahan
- Taj Mahal
- Aurangzeb

SETTING THE STAGE The Gupta Empire, which you read about in Chapter 7, crumbled in the late 400s. First, Arabs invaded. Then, warlike Muslim tribes from Central Asia carved northwestern India into many small kingdoms. Leaders called *rajputs*, or “sons of kings,” ruled those kingdoms. The people who invaded descended from Muslim Turks and Afghans. Their leader was a descendant of Timur the Lame and of the Mongol conqueror Genghis Khan. They called themselves **Mughals**, which means “Mongols.” The land they invaded had been through a long period of turmoil.

TAKING NOTES

Following Chronological Order Create a time line of the Mughal emperors and their successes.

1494

Babur

Early History of the Mughals

The 8th century began with a long, bloody clash between Hindus and Muslims in this fragmented land. For almost 300 years, the Muslims were able to advance only as far as the Indus River valley. Starting around the year 1000, however, well-trained Turkish armies swept into India. Led by Sultan Mahmud (muh•MOOD) of Ghazni, they devastated Indian cities and temples in 17 brutal campaigns. These attacks left the region weakened and vulnerable to other conquerors. Delhi eventually became the capital of a loose empire of Turkish warlords called the Delhi Sultanate. These sultans treated the Hindus as conquered people.

Delhi Sultanate Between the 13th and 16th centuries, 33 different sultans ruled this divided territory from their seat in Delhi. In 1398, Timur the Lame destroyed Delhi. The city was so completely devastated that according to one witness, “for months, not a bird moved in the city.” Delhi eventually was rebuilt. But it was not until the 16th century that a leader arose who would unify the empire.

Babur Finds an Empire In 1494, an 11-year-old boy named **Babur** inherited a kingdom in the area that is now Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. It was only a tiny kingdom, and his elders soon took it away and drove him south. But Babur built up an army. In the years that followed, he swept down into India and laid the foundation for the vast Mughal Empire.

Babur was a brilliant general. In 1526, for example, he led 12,000 troops to victory against an army of 100,000 commanded by a sultan of Delhi. A year later, Babur also defeated a massive rajput army. After Babur’s death, his incompetent son, Humayun, lost most of the territory Babur had gained. Babur’s 13-year-old grandson took over the throne after Humayun’s death.

Akbar's Golden Age

Babur's grandson was called **Akbar**, which means "Greatest One." Akbar certainly lived up to his name, ruling India with wisdom and tolerance from 1556 to 1605.

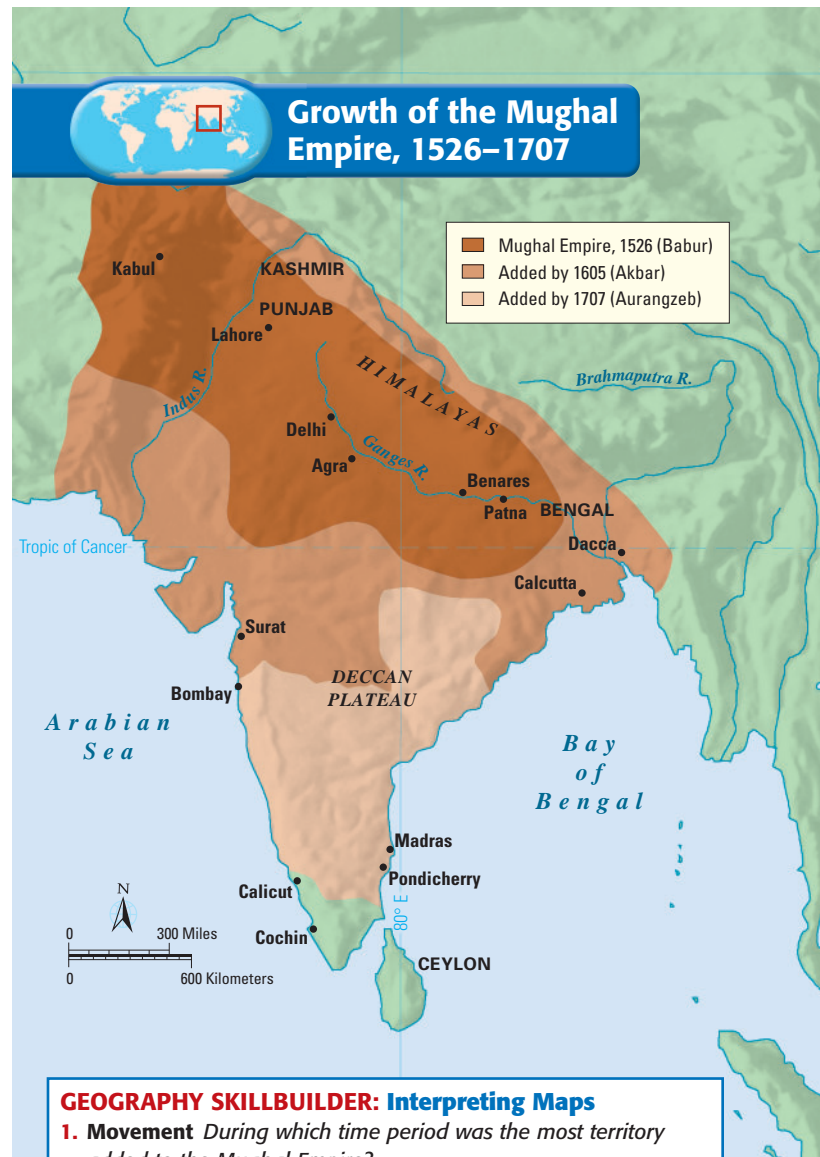
A Military Conqueror Akbar recognized military power as the root of his strength. In his opinion, "A monarch should ever be intent on conquest, otherwise his neighbors rise in arms against him."

Like the Safavids and the Ottomans, Akbar equipped his armies with heavy artillery. Cannons enabled him to break into walled cities and extend his rule into much of the Deccan plateau. In a brilliant move, he appointed some rajputs as officers. In this way he turned potential enemies into allies. This combination of military power and political wisdom enabled Akbar to unify a land of at least 100 million people—more than in all of Europe put together.

A Liberal Ruler Akbar was a genius at cultural blending. He was a Muslim, and he firmly defended religious freedom. He permitted people of other religions to practice their faiths. He proved his tolerance by marrying, among others, two Hindus, a Christian, and a Muslim. He allowed his wives to practice their religious rituals in the palace. He proved his tolerance again by abolishing both the tax on Hindu pilgrims and the hated *jizya*, or tax on non-Muslims. He even appointed a Spanish Jesuit to tutor his second son.

Akbar governed through a bureaucracy of officials. Natives and foreigners, Hindus and Muslims, could all rise to high office. This approach contributed to the quality of his government. Akbar's chief finance minister, Todar Mal, a Hindu, created a clever—and effective—taxation policy. He levied a tax similar to the present-day U.S. graduated income tax, calculating it as a percentage of the value of the peasants' crops. Because this tax was fair and affordable, the number of peasants who paid it increased. This payment brought in much needed money for the empire. **A**

Akbar's land policies had more mixed results. He gave generous land grants to his bureaucrats. After they died, however, he reclaimed the lands and distributed them as he saw fit. On the positive side, this policy prevented the growth of feudal aristocracies. On the other hand, it did not encourage dedication and hard work by the Mughal officials. Their children would not inherit the land or benefit from their parents' work. So the officials apparently saw no point in devoting themselves to their property.



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps

- 1. Movement** During which time period was the most territory added to the Mughal Empire?
- 2. Human-Environment Interaction** What landform might have prevented the empire from expanding farther east?

MAIN IDEA

Comparing

A In what ways were Akbar's attitudes toward religion similar to those of Suleyman the Lawgiver?

HistoryMakers



Akbar 1542–1605

Akbar was brilliant and curious, especially about religion. He even invented a religion of his own—the “Divine Faith”—which combined elements of Hinduism, Jainism, Christianity, and Sufism. The religion attracted few followers, however, and offended Muslims so much that they attempted a brief revolt against Akbar in 1581. When he died, so did the “Divine Faith.”

Surprisingly, despite his wisdom and his achievements, Akbar could not read. He hired others to read to him from his library of 24,000 books.

INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY

RESEARCH LINKS For more on Akbar, go to classzone.com

A Flowering of Culture As Akbar extended the Mughal Empire, he welcomed influences from the many cultures in the empire. This cultural blending affected art, education, politics, and language. Persian was the language of Akbar’s court and of high culture. The common people, however, spoke Hindi, a mixture of Persian and a local language. Hindi remains one of the most widely spoken languages in India today. Out of the Mughal armies, where soldiers of many backgrounds rubbed shoulders, came yet another new language. This language was Urdu, which means “from the soldier’s camp.” A blend of Arabic, Persian, and Hindi, Urdu is today the official language of Pakistan.

The Arts and Literature The arts flourished at the Mughal court, especially in the form of book illustrations. These small, highly detailed, and colorful paintings were called miniatures. They were brought to a peak of perfection in the Safavid Empire. Babur’s son, Humayun, brought two masters of this art to his court to teach it to the Mughals. Some of the most famous Mughal miniatures adorned the *Akbarnamah* (“Book of Akbar”), the story of the great emperor’s campaigns and deeds. Indian art drew from Western traditions as well.

Hindu literature also enjoyed a revival in Akbar’s time. The poet Tulsi Das, for example, was a contemporary of Akbar’s. He retold the epic love story of Rama and Sita from the fourth century B.C. Indian poem the *Ramayana* (rah•MAH•yuh•nuh) in Hindi. This retelling, the *Ramcaritmanas*, is now even more popular than the original.

Architecture Akbar devoted himself to architecture, too. The style developed under his reign is still known as Akbar period architecture. Its massive but graceful structures are

decorated with intricate stonework that portrays Hindu themes. The capital city of Fatehpur Sikri is one of the most important examples of this type of architecture. Akbar had this red-sandstone city built to thank a holy man who had predicted the birth of his first son. **B**

MAIN IDEA

Drawing Conclusions

B How was Akbar able to build such an immense empire?

Akbar’s Successors

With Akbar’s death in 1605, the Mughal court changed to deal with the changing times. The next three emperors each left his mark on the Mughal Empire.

Jahangir and Nur Jahan Akbar’s son called himself Jahangir (juh•hahn•GEER)—“Grasper of the World.” And he certainly did hold India in a powerful grasp. It was not his hand in the iron glove, however. For most of his reign, he left the affairs of state to his wife.

Jahangir’s wife was the Persian princess Nur Jahan. She was a brilliant politician who perfectly understood the use of power. As the real ruler of India, she installed her father as prime minister in the Mughal court. She saw Jahangir’s son Khusrau as her ticket to future power. But when Khusrau rebelled against his father, Nur Jahan removed him. She then shifted her favor to another son.

This rejection of Khusrau affected more than the political future of the empire. It was also the basis of a long and bitter religious conflict. Jahangir tried to promote Islam in the Mughal state, but was tolerant of other religions. When Khusrau

Women Leaders of the Indian Subcontinent

Since World War II, the subcontinent of India has seen the rise of several powerful women. Unlike Nur Jahan, however, they achieved power on their own—not through their husbands.

Indira Gandhi headed the Congress Party and dominated Indian politics for almost 30 years. She was elected prime minister in 1966 and again in 1980. Gandhi was assassinated in 1984 by Sikh separatists.

Benazir Bhutto took charge of the Pakistan People's Party after her father was executed by his political enemies. She won election as her country's prime

minister in 1988, the first woman to run a modern Muslim state. She was reelected in 1993.

Khaleda Zia became Bangladesh's first woman prime minister in 1991. She was reelected several times, the last time in 2001. She has made progress in empowering women and girls in her nation.

Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga is the president of Sri Lanka. She was elected in 1994 with 62 percent of the votes cast. She survived an assassination attempt in 1999 and was reelected.



Indira Gandhi



Benazir Bhutto



Khaleda Zia



Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga

MAIN IDEA

Analyzing Causes

C How did the Mughals' dislike of the Sikhs develop?

rebelled, he turned to the **Sikhs**. This was a nonviolent religious group whose doctrines blended Buddhism, Hinduism, and Sufism (Islamic mysticism). Their leader, Guru Arjun, sheltered Khusrav and defended him. In response, the Mughal rulers had Arjun arrested and tortured to death. The Sikhs became the target of the Mughals' particular hatred. **C**

Shah Jahan Jahangir's son and successor, **Shah Jahan**, could not tolerate competition and secured his throne by assassinating all his possible rivals. He had a great passion for two things: beautiful buildings and his wife Mumtaz Mahal (moom•TAHZ mah•HAHL). Nur Jahan had arranged this marriage between Jahangir's son and her niece for political reasons. Shah Jahan, however, fell genuinely in love with his Persian princess.

In 1631, Mumtaz Mahal died at age 39 while giving birth to her 14th child. To enshrine his wife's memory, he ordered that a tomb be built "as beautiful as she was beautiful." Fine white marble and fabulous jewels were gathered from many parts of Asia. This memorial, the **Taj Mahal**, has been called one of the most beautiful buildings in the world. Its towering marble dome and slender minaret towers look like lace and seem to change color as the sun moves across the sky.

The People Suffer But while Shah Jahan was building lovely things, his country was suffering. There was famine in the land. Furthermore, farmers needed tools, roads, and ways of irrigating their crops and dealing with India's harsh environment. What they got instead were taxes and more taxes to support the building of monuments, their rulers' extravagant living, and war.



History *in* Depth

Building the Taj Mahal

Some 20,000 workers labored for 22 years to build the famous tomb. It is made of white marble brought from 250 miles away. The minaret towers are about 130 feet high. The building itself is 186 feet square.

The design of the building is a blend of Hindu and Muslim styles. The pointed arches are of Muslim design, and the perforated marble windows and doors are typical of a style found in Hindu temples.

The inside of the building is a glittering garden of thousands of carved marble flowers inlaid with tiny precious stones. One tiny flower, one inch square, had 60 different inlays.

INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY

INTERNET ACTIVITY Use the Internet to take a virtual trip to the Taj Mahal. Create a brochure about the building. Go to classzone.com for your research.

All was not well in the royal court either. When Shah Jahan became ill in 1657, his four sons scrambled for the throne. The third son, **Aurangzeb** (AWR•uhng•zehb), moved first and most decisively. In a bitter civil war, he executed his older brother, who was his most serious rival. Then he arrested his father and put him in prison, where he died several years later. After Shah Jahan's death, a mirror was found in his room, angled so that he could look out at the reflection of the Taj Mahal.

Aurangzeb's Reign A master at military strategy and an aggressive empire builder, Aurangzeb ruled from 1658 to 1707. He expanded the Mughal holdings to their greatest size. However, the power of the empire weakened during his reign.

This loss of power was due largely to Aurangzeb's oppression of the people. He rigidly enforced Islamic laws, outlawing drinking, gambling, and other activities viewed as vices. He appointed censors to police his subjects' morals and make sure they prayed at the appointed times. He also tried to erase all the gains Hindus had made under Akbar. For example, he brought back the hated tax on non-Muslims and dismissed Hindus from high positions in his government. He banned the construction of new temples and had Hindu monuments destroyed. Not surprisingly, these actions outraged the Hindus.

▲ Mirrored in a reflecting pool is the Taj Mahal, a monument to love and the Mughal Empire.

MAIN IDEA

Recognizing Effects

D How did Aurangzeb's personal qualities and political policies affect the Mughal Empire?

The Hindu rajputs, whom Akbar had converted from potential enemies to allies, rebelled. Aurangzeb defeated them repeatedly, but never completely. In the south-west, militant Hindus called Marathas founded their own state. Aurangzeb captured their leader but could never conquer them. Meanwhile, the Sikhs transformed themselves into a militant brotherhood. They began building a state in the Punjab, an area in northwest India.

Aurangzeb levied oppressive taxes to pay for the wars against the increasing numbers of enemies. He had done away with all taxes not authorized by Islamic law, so he doubled the taxes on Hindu merchants. This increased tax burden deepened the Hindus' bitterness and led to further rebellion. As a result, Aurangzeb needed to raise more money to increase his army. The more territory he conquered, the more desperate his situation became. **D**

The Empire's Decline and Decay

By the end of Aurangzeb's reign, he had drained the empire of its resources. Over 2 million people died in a famine while Aurangzeb was away waging war. Most of his subjects felt little or no loyalty to him.

As the power of the central state weakened, the power of local lords grew. After Aurangzeb's death, his sons fought a war of succession. In fact, three emperors reigned in the first 12 years after Aurangzeb died. By the end of this period, the Mughal emperor was nothing but a wealthy figurehead. He ruled not a united empire but a patchwork of independent states.

As the Mughal Empire rose and fell, Western traders slowly built their own power in the region. The Portuguese were the first Europeans to reach India. In fact, they arrived just before Babur did. Next came the Dutch, who in turn gave way to the French and the English. However, the great Mughal emperors did not feel threatened by the European traders. Shah Jahan let the English build a fortified trading post at Madras. In 1661, Aurangzeb casually handed them the port of Bombay. Aurangzeb had no idea that he had given India's next conquerors their first foothold in a future empire.

SECTION

3

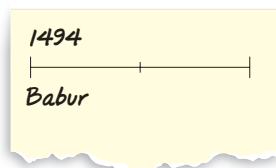
ASSESSMENT

TERMS & NAMES 1. For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

• Mughal • Babur • Akbar • Sikh • Shah Jahan • Taj Mahal • Aurangzeb

USING YOUR NOTES

2. Which of the Mughal emperors on your time line had a positive effect on the empire? Which had negative effects?



MAIN IDEAS

3. How did Akbar demonstrate tolerance in his empire?
4. What pattern is seen in the ways individuals came to power in the Mughal Empire?
5. Why did the empire weaken under the rule of Aurangzeb?

CRITICAL THINKING & WRITING

6. **CLARIFYING** Why were Akbar's tax policies so successful?
7. **MAKING INFERENCES** Why was Nur Jahan able to hold so much power in Jahangir's court?
8. **EVALUATING COURSES OF ACTION** Why were the policies of Aurangzeb so destructive to the Mughal Empire?
9. **WRITING ACTIVITY** **POWER AND AUTHORITY** Write a **compare-and-contrast essay** on the policies of Akbar and Aurangzeb. Use references from the text in your response.

CONNECT TO TODAY CREATING A BIOGRAPHY

Select one of the women leaders in Connect to Today on page 519. Research her life and write a short **biography** of her.